

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) An item, comprising:

an item surface; and

a plurality of machine-readable item codes printed on the item surface, ~~at least one of the plurality of item codes being associated with the item and being substantially invisible to a human.~~

2. (currently amended) The item of claim 1, wherein ~~each of the item codes are associated with the item and are substantially invisible to a human~~ the plurality of item codes includes a first item code and a second item code located remotely from the first item code on the item surface.

3. (currently amended) The item of claim 1, wherein at least two of the item codes ~~contain the same information~~ are identical.

4. The item of claim 1, wherein at least two of the item codes contain different information.

5. The item of claim 4, wherein the different information is adapted to be combined via at least one of: (i) a sequence number in each item code; (ii) at least one item code describing an order in which at least one other item code should be combined, and (iii) a position of the item codes on the item surface.

6. The item of claim 4, wherein at least one item code contains meta-data associated with at least one other item code.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the at least two of the item codes containing different information are printed on the item surface via different techniques to render the item codes substantially invisible to a human.

8. (currently amended) The item of claim 1, wherein at least one item code comprises at least one of: (i) a bar code, (ii) a two-dimensional code, and (iii) a watermark.

9. The item of claim 1, wherein at least one item code indicates at least one of: (i) an item identifier, (ii) a manufacturer identifier, (iii) a distributor identifier, (iv) a delivery service identifier, (v) a purchaser identifier, (vi) an owner identifier, (vii) a user identifier, and (viii) a merchant identifier.

10. The item of claim 1, wherein at least one item code is adapted for use with at least one of: (i) a point of sale system, (ii) an inventory system, (iii) a delivery service system, (iv) an identification system, (v) a warehousing system, (vi) a smart shopping cart system, (vii) a production system, and (viii) an assembly system.

11. The item of claim 1, wherein at least one item code is formed using at least one of: (i) a chemical, (ii) an invisible ink, (iii) an ink that becomes visible in ultra-violet light, and (iv) an ink detectable with radiation outside of the visible spectrum.

12. The item of claim 1, wherein the item comprises at least one of: (i) a product, (ii) an identification card, (iii) a negotiable instrument, (iv) a container, (v) a package, (vi) an envelope, (vii) an event ticket, and (viii) a document.

13. The item of claim 1, wherein the item surface comprises at least one of: (i) a product surface, (ii) a product label, (iii) a product tag, (iv) a picture, (v) an image, (vi) a container surface, (vii) a package surface, (viii) a container label, (ix) a package label, (x) a container tag, and (xi) a package tag.

14. (currently amended) The item of claim 1, wherein the item has ~~two distinct item surface areas, and at least one item code is printed each distinct item surface area~~ at least two sides and at least one of the item codes is printed on each of the two sides.

15. (currently amended) The item of claim 1, wherein visible information is displayed printed on the same area of the item surface as at least one item code.

16. (currently amended) An identification card associated with a card-holder, comprising:  
an identification card surface;  
visible information printed on the identification card surface; and  
a machine-readable code printed on the same area of the identification card surface as the visible information, the code being associated with the card-holder and being substantially invisible to a human.

17. The identification card of claim 16, wherein the code indicates at least one of: (i) a card-holder identifier, (ii) a benefit, and (iii) an expiration date.

18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) The identification card of claim 15, wherein a plurality of codes are printed on the identification card surface, each of the codes being associated with the card-holder and being substantially invisible to a human.

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (canceled)

23. (canceled)

24. (canceled)

25. (currently amended) A method of marking an item having an item surface, comprising:

determining an item code associated with the item; and

printing a plurality of machine-readable item codes on the item surface, ~~at least one of the plurality of item codes being associated with the item and being substantially invisible to a human.~~

26. (currently amended) An apparatus for marking an item, comprising:

a printing controller; and

a printing device in communication with the printing controller and adapted to print a plurality of machine-readable item codes on the item surface, ~~at least one of the item codes being associated with the item and being substantially invisible to a human.~~

27. (canceled)

28. (canceled)

29. (new) An item, comprising:

a first item side having printed thereon a first machine-readable item code, the first item code being associated with the item and substantially invisible to a human; and

a second item side having printed thereon a second machine-readable item code, the second item code being identical to the first item code and substantially invisible to a human,

wherein visible information is printed on the same area of the item surface as at least one of the item codes.